

Date: 8/09/2020

To: Students' Union Council

Re: Vice President Academic 2020/21 Report #10

Dear Council,

It's been a busy time since we've last met! Here is a snapshot of what I've been up to for the past little while. Hope you enjoy it!

Meeting with Provost

- President Agarwal and myself met with Vice Provost Steve Dew ahead of his presentation at council last meeting. At this meeting I had the opportunity to raise concerns around Academic Advising, the SET initiative, and Campus Sexual Violence Prevention.

Inaugural meeting of the Program Support Team

- The first ever meeting of the Program Support Team took place. This is an administrative group which works in conjunction with the GFC Programs committee to help vet and improve program submissions for the committee. This was quite an interesting committee and is currently working on some updates to the university calendar.

Meeting with the Associate Registrar

- One of the topics which was discussed at the PST meeting also led to a very engaging discussion with the Associate Registrar. Due to Covid-19 the university has had to look at other ways of assessing english language requirements for international students as many of the traditional tests have been cancelled or are unavailable in certain parts of the world. Along with many other U15 institutions the U of A has actually started using a specific test available through DuoLingo to gauge english language proficiency, as after the pandemic hit, the app saw its opportunity and developed an exam similar to those already on the market. This exam is free and students can do it in their own home! Due to continued restrictions the University is looking to extend their use of it and gather data surrounding the student success for those who were admitted with that as their language exam. If the exam proves to be a good indicator, then this will be a great win for accessibility to the university, as traditional tests can be quite expensive and difficult to access.

Presidents' Address

- Last monday was the official Presidents' Address! I had the honour of opening and closing the evening and it was a fantastic experience! However I do still find it an odd tradition for us to tell the entire incoming class the address of the president, but I digress.

Gov Camp

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- I took part in the closing circle for module 3 of Govcamp last week. The experience was one I truly hope all student representatives will engage with for years to come. The knowledge that was provided to us as well as the opportunity for reflection was greatly appreciated. I would like to specifically thank Kelsi for all of her hard work on the module. I know a lot of emotional labour from many people went into the materials provided to us, and I hope you know how deeply it is appreciated.

Policy Committee

- Policy committee met for an unusual meeting which I found very valuable. Abner had us come prepared to the meeting with a list of our goals for the year and reflect on how we can work with the policy committee to achieve them. This was a great opportunity to reflect on what we have done so far and what we can do in the coming months. I think this is a valuable opportunity that would be beneficial to all council committees.

Public health response team Academic Impacts Group

- The PHRT met on the second day of classes to reflect on the implementation of the work we put in over the summer. There have definitely been hiccups as of yet in the semester but from what we can see many classes are taking the guidelines we wrote very seriously and have made a conscious effort to structure their courses in student friendly ways.

Campus Tour with Ellen Schoeck.

- The Executive team went on a tour of Campus with Ellen Schoeck. Ellen is an absolute wealth of knowledge surrounding the campus and the stories it holds. She has written multiple books about the history of the University through the lived experiences of the people on campus. She's currently working on a book focused on residences and has plans to write about the Students Union after that!

First Day of Classes

- Classes are back in full swing! Although there have been issues with the start up of the new semester it is still good to be back. Education is my favourite pastime and I am very excited for my course this semester.

Personal Life Update.

- Things have been relatively calm in my personal life. The biggest addition to my household is a new record player / radio I snagged from an online estate sale. The sound quality is unlike anything I've heard before, but I do need to do some maintenance on the needle. I also purchased a globe lamp which has become my new favourite light source in my apartment. As always, if you have any questions, comments, concerns, ideas, dog photos, or anything else,

don't hesitate to reach out!

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